



Open hearts. Open minds. Open doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church™

Officemaderaumc@gmail.com

The Grapevine

500 Sunset, Madera CA 93637 -

(559) 674-8704

Dec 2025

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Sunday Morning Schedule:

10:00 am Worship

Office Hours:

9:00 am - 12:00 pm Tuesday-Friday

Phone: 559-674-8704

December 2025

By Jim Garrison

Christmas Benediction

*May your Advent be awesome
May your Christmas be cozy
May the chill in the air
Keep your cheeks always rosy*

*May your stockings be full
May your lights brightly twinkle
May your photos turn out
Showing nary a wrinkle*

*May your shopping be peaceful,
Your cooking quite yummy
May you eat all you please
Without stretching your tummy*

*May your tree harbor gifts
For friends and relations
May your parties be filled
With great celebration*



*May your carols proclaim
The miraculous birth
Bringing joy to the world
And peace on the earth*

*As the angels sing "glory"
To God up above
Please know Christ is with you
And you're held in his love.*

Merry Christmas!



Pastor Jim

Advent Supper & Christmas Carols

Our Advent Supper & Christmas Carols is Saturday, December 13, beginning at 4:30 pm and is open to all members and friends. This is a great opportunity to bring guests. Sign-ups are available to bring soup, sides, main dish or dessert and we'll eat in courses in the Social Hall. The Martinez sisters will provide hors d'oeuvres.

In prior years we have held a progressive dinner within the church facility, but we have outgrown the ability to continue with this format, so Missions is trying something a little different this year.

Hors d'oeuvres will be available upon arrival, and you're invited to mingle and greet one another as you enjoy the treats! At 5:00 pm

we'll have the blessing and enjoy the soup course. Around 5:20 pm we will do one of those great, fun games Dianna prepares – really even those who don't like games had fun with the last ones! Then we'll move on to enjoy the potluck by course! After dinner, one final game then we will enjoy dessert and carols in the Fireside Room with Mike at the piano.

Advent Concert

Musica Viva, a husband-and-wife team, will present "Advent Reflections Through Words & Music: Light and Hope" on Friday, December 19, at 4:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Plan to enjoy an afternoon of readings and musical meditations featuring violinist Susan Doering and cellist Dieter Wulforst. Together these two explore unique music and perform all over the world.

The program will feature readings by various poets, authors, philosophers, and spiritual leaders, and music specifically representative of the themes of light and hope. Please feel free to bring your family, a colleague, a friend, or a few friends. Admission is free; donations are welcome. Let's share the music and message together as we prepare for this most wonderful Season of the Year!!!

Spotlight – Child Care

The festive Christmas season is a time of great joy. Our Sunday school children will have the

opportunity to engage in enjoyable activities and songs that promote their understanding of the Christmas advent and the birth of Jesus. There will be numerous craft activities and music during this time. We will also be focusing on Christian Christmas songs for children. One particular example is a rendition of 'Jingle Bells' with a Jesus-centered twist, where the children can be heard singing their hearts out and having fun.

We look forward to the children learning Bible sight words that will introduce them to reading the Bible and more. There are also opportunities for children to participate in church services by lighting candles and singing for the rest of the church family during this time of Christmas.

We invite children to join Sunday school, expand their knowledge of the Bible, meet new friends, and have fun. I look forward to witnessing the continued growth of our church family through the participation of children in Sunday school activities. Let's all have fun during this Christmas time and have the children come out and see what Sunday school is all about.

Erica Gonzalez

Finance Committee

The holiday season is upon us. This month we will celebrate with anticipation the greatest gift of all, the birth of the Lord Jesus, the Messiah. He came to bring us love and light. It is through him that we receive our salvation. Jesus is the reason for the season.

One of the ways we honor God is through our gifts to his ministry, and to others in need. We learn much about giving from His Word.

"Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." (2 Corinthians 9:7-8)

Your generous giving helps us to continue this ministry. At this time of year, we are always hopeful and trusting that God will provide the contributions to end the year with a positive net income. He has always been faithful to supply our needs.

For the month of October 2025:

Total Income	\$ 27,432.47
Total Expenses	<u>25,380.67</u>
Net Income	\$ 2,051.80

For the year 2025:

Total Income	\$ 207,799.29
Total Expenses	<u>233,873.75</u>
Net Income (loss)	\$ (26,074.46)

10/31/25 General Fund balance \$96,647.70
10/31/25 Restricted Funds balance \$79,087.48
10/31/25 Endowment Fund balance
\$109,267.01

Our tithing to the conference is current. The conference uses our tithes for global outreach.

As we look forward to the new year, please

remember prayerfully your contribution plans for the church.

Have a wonderfully blessed holiday season, and a very Merry Christmas!
Thank you for your prayers and your contributions to the church.

Nancy Simpson, Treasurer

Member News



Cheryl Blackstone was honored at the annual MUSD Service with Pride event. Cheryl was inducted into the Madera Linkage Foundation Student Hall of Fame. She dedicated 28 years to serving the students, staff, and families of Madera Unified.

Cheryl began her career with the district in 1989 and served in Adult Education, Howard Elementary, and John Adams Elementary, where she spent 23 years before retiring in 2017. The introduction noted Cheryl is known for her professionalism, warmth, and strong relationships, noting, "She helped create welcoming and supportive school communities. Even in retirement, she continues to serve as a substitute administrative assistant and remains active in community volunteer work. Her long-standing devotion to others reflects the very best of MUSD." Congratulations Cheryl on this well-deserved honor!

Judy Croom's email and phone were hacked. Please call the office if you need her new contact information.

Trustees Report

As you all know, the irrigation project is continuing. The drip system has been installed under all areas with river rock, and the entire sprinkler system is in the final stages of completion.

Four new trees have been planted in the front lawn area. In February, pre-emergence will be applied to encourage new growth and kill any weeds. Then, in the spring, new planting will be done in the flowerbeds, and additional trees may be planted in the courtyard and other areas surrounding the church.

Overhead lights in the classrooms have been reinstalled.

The Trustees and Ginnie Sterling, our church secretary, are in the process of updating our Facility Use Agreements.

As 2025 comes to an end, I would like to thank all of my fellow Trustees (Bert Roper, David Eddy, David Simpson, Doug Baron, Mike Chicconi, Julie Flowers, Crystal Wiggins, and Fred Mossman) for their continued commitment to the maintenance and beautification of our church. I would also like to thank our congregation, and Pastor Jim, for their support and generous contributions.

The next regular meeting of Trustees is scheduled for January 6, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. All are invited to attend.

May you have a joyful and blessing Christmas, and a Happy New Year!

Bobby Carter, Chair

Host 4th Sunday Lunch in 2026

Our special thanks to those who have previously hosted 4th Sunday Lunches in 2025. Let's be in thoughtful prayer asking for some new hosts / hostesses in 2026! There is a signup sheet in the sanctuary to sign up to host and Guidelines are there as well.

Of course, we'd love to see some new folks sign up and, although the Guidelines might look intimidating, the experience is rewarding and not difficult if you involve friends and family! If you think you would like to host a lunch, please see Ginnie in the office or give her a call at 559-514-4482 and she'll be glad to review the requirements and answer any questions.



December Birthdays

12/ 1	Debbie Valencia
12/ 2	Samuel Curran
12/ 3	Michelle Long
	Kevin Sherrod
12/ 6	Ruth Beckman
	Ron Wood
12/11	Kyle Garrison
12/15	Margaret Potter
12/16	Doug Carpenter
12/17	Paul Martin
12/21	Tiffany Knoll
12/26	Lee Blackstone
12/27	Tina Unti
12/28	Fred Mossman
12/28	Bert Roper
12/31	Phil Mayer
	James Young

December Anniversaries

12/ 9	Mike & Vivian Chicconi
12/16	Larry & Janice Lowder
12/29	Bobby & Alice Carter
12/31	Phil & Kay Mayer
	Jim & Tina Unti

If your Birthday or Anniversary is incorrect or is not listed, please call the church office so we can update our records.



12/ 7 Dianna Combs
 12/14 Candy Talley & Sally Frazier
 12/21 Ginnie Sterling & Family
 12/28 Erica Gonzalez, Family & Friends



12/ 7 Pat Galleano & Geri Brown
 12/14 Candy Talley & Salley Frazier
 12/21 Ginnie Sterling & Family
 11/28 Erica Gonzalez, Family & Friends



12/ 7 Crystal & Eric
 12/14 Dianna & Doug
 12/21 Sue & Tiffany
 12/24 Crystal & Eric
 12/28 Dianna & Doug

Online Giving

This online giving portal may be accessed through our website at maderaumc.org. At the Top of the opening page, there is a red "Donate" button, which will take you to our Online Giving site. There you will find various options.

You may also use our QR Code that will take you directly to our Online Giving site. Just open your phone camera and hover it over the QR Code. Then touch the pop-up that appears.



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December 22, 2025 @9:00 am
Please send any Articles you would like in
the Grapevine by the date above



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The Grapevine

<i>Sun</i>	<i>Mon</i>	<i>Tue</i>	<i>Wed</i>	<i>Thu</i>	<i>Fri</i>	<i>Sat</i>
	1 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	2 9:00 am Small Group (CR)	3 5:30 pm Campfire (CR)	4 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's)	5 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	6
7 10:00 am Worship Service Communion	8 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	9 9:00 am Small Group (CR)	10 5:30 pm Nurture & Care (FR)	11 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's)	12 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	13 4:30 pm Advent Supper & Christmas Carols 
14 10:00 am Worship Service	15 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 6:00 pm Finance (CR) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	16 9:00 am Small Group (CR) 5:00 pm Missions (FR) No Church Council	17 <i>Central Valley District Leader's Christmas Lunch (FR)</i>	18 6:30 am Bible Study (Perko's) 9:00 am 55+ Food Distribution	19 7:00 am TOPS (CR) 4:00 pm Advent Concert (S)	20
21 10:00 am Worship Service	22 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	23 9:00 am Small Group (CR)	24 5:00 pm Candlelight Service (S) 	25 Christmas Day 	26 7:00 am TOPS (CR)	27
28 10:00 am Worship Service	29 6:45 am Prayer Group (CR) 4:00 pm Small Group (Cedar) 7:00 pm Scouts (SH-CR)	30 9:00 am Food Distribution 9:00 am Small Group (CR)	31			7